

Sin is Devastating (Joel 1:2-20)

Lesson 5

Sin likes to hide its price tag, because it is very, very expensive. Like the slick salesman that signs on a naïve customer, so sin likes to hide its final outcome so we think there will be no serious consequences. Then after a long time, sin comes to collect payment and people are left with ruined marriages, soiled reputations, wasted money, wasted time, and their life's work crumbling before them. Sin is devastating, but too often we doubt that until it is too late.

The solution is, at least in part, to take a long walk with Joel through a shattered country. Hopefully, we can learn by proxy the devastating effects of sin, and in doing so can avoid learning the lesson firsthand.

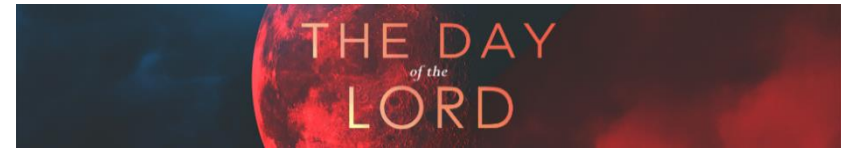
Introduction: The Tragedy of the Locusts (2-4)

Joel calls on the people to learn from what had happened so that they didn't repeat the same mistakes. He never lists the sins Judah was guilty of, but we do know that ruined crops were promised as a punishment for the people if they turned away from God (Deut. 28). Whatever it was, Judah had rejected God's covenant and were paying the price. Nothing left; all has been eaten.

Calls for Mourning (5-14)

Judah must take the consequences of their sin very seriously.

- A. **Call for the _____ to mourn (5-7).**
God's blessings can sadly lead to indulgence and abuse. Here, the people are apathetic, enjoying God's blessing but spiritually dull.
- B. **Call for the _____ to mourn (8-10).**
The people are not able to worship God because the land has been devastated. God's blessings have been removed.
- C. **Call for the _____ to mourn (11-12).**
The people should mourn because the produce is gone.



Sin is Devastating (Joel 1:2-20)

Lesson 5

Sin likes to hide its price tag, because it is very, very expensive. Like the slick salesman that signs on a naïve customer, so sin likes to hide its final outcome so we think there will be no serious consequences. Then after a long time, sin comes to collect payment and people are left with ruined marriages, soiled reputations, wasted money, wasted time, and their life's work crumbling before them. Sin is devastating, but too often we doubt that until it is too late.

The solution is, at least in part, to take a long walk with Joel through a shattered country. Hopefully, we can learn by proxy the devastating effects of sin, and in doing so can avoid learning the lesson firsthand.

Introduction: The Tragedy of the Locusts (2-4)

Joel calls on the people to learn from what had happened so that they didn't repeat the same mistakes. He never lists the sins Judah was guilty of, but we do know that ruined crops were promised as a punishment for the people if they turned away from God (Deut. 28). Whatever it was, Judah had rejected God's covenant and were paying the price. Nothing left; all has been eaten.

Calls for Mourning (5-14)

Judah must take the consequences of their sin very seriously.

- A. **Call for the _____ to mourn (5-7).**
God's blessings can sadly lead to indulgence and abuse. Here, the people are apathetic, enjoying God's blessing but spiritually dull.
- B. **Call for the _____ to mourn (8-10).**
The people are not able to worship God because the land has been devastated. God's blessings have been removed.
- C. **Call for the _____ to mourn (11-12).**
The people should mourn because the produce is gone.

D. Call for the _____ to mourn (13-14).

The call is not just to sorrow, but for the nation to repent. It is not enough to feel bad; their sorrow must lead to actual repentance.

The Day of the Lord (15-20)

This chapter ends on a pretty depressing note. The water is gone. The pastures have been devoured. The animals are even crying out. All of this is the result of Israel's sin, and Joel leaves this first section with a sad picture of the state of the country. Although Joel will eventually end on a high note, right now the nation should be reeling from this powerful judgment God had sent their way.

Application

The Devastation of Disobedience

Sin is devastating. Especially for believers who have grown up as second generation Christians, the temptation is always to look over at the world on the other side of the fence and wonder "Is it really that bad over there?" Yes, and it's actually far worse.

The Proper Response to Discipline

A. _____ over the loss of God's blessings.

When sin costs us, it is fitting to mourn. God expects us to sorrow over loss when we have done nothing wrong, but also when we experience loss as a result of sin.

B. _____ over wrongdoing.

Our sorrow should result in turning away from sin and turning to God. We should cry out, asking for mercy as we realize the sad end of our choices and turn to God for forgiveness and healing.

Many today laugh off sin and the consequences of sin, but sin is devastating. It brings ruin and destruction, often in subtle ways that we miss until it is too late. Taking time to mourn over our sin can be a wonderful tool when it leads to genuine repentance. As the author of Hebrews puts it: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Hebrews 12:11)

D. Call for the _____ to mourn (13-14).

The call is not just to sorrow, but for the nation to repent. It is not enough to feel bad; their sorrow must lead to actual repentance.

The Day of the Lord (15-20)

This chapter ends on a pretty depressing note. The water is gone. The pastures have been devoured. The animals are even crying out. All of this is the result of Israel's sin, and Joel leaves this first section with a sad picture of the state of the country. Although Joel will eventually end on a high note, right now the nation should be reeling from this powerful judgment God had sent their way.

Application

The Devastation of Disobedience

Sin is devastating. Especially for believers who have grown up as second generation Christians, the temptation is always to look over at the world on the other side of the fence and wonder "Is it really that bad over there?" Yes, and it's actually far worse.

The Proper Response to Discipline

A. _____ over the loss of God's blessings.

When sin costs us, it is fitting to mourn. God expects us to sorrow over loss when we have done nothing wrong, but also when we experience loss as a result of sin.

B. _____ over wrongdoing.

Our sorrow should result in turning away from sin and turning to God. We should cry out, asking for mercy as we realize the sad end of our choices and turn to God for forgiveness and healing.

Many today laugh off sin and the consequences of sin, but sin is devastating. It brings ruin and destruction, often in subtle ways that we miss until it is too late. Taking time to mourn over our sin can be a wonderful tool when it leads to genuine repentance. As the author of Hebrews puts it: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Hebrews 12:11)